10 Air Quality Element (Page 10-1)

10.1 Introduction

Clean air is a critical environmental resource that affects the daily life of residents and can be a significant factor in sustaining the economic viability of the City. The Air Quality Element promotes air quality standards in all aspects of development, transportation, and activity affected by this General Plan to protect the health and welfare of the community.

The Air Quality Element addresses the primary air quality concerns in the region. These include ozone precursors from internal combustion engines (smog), dust and other man-made airborne particles, objectionable odors and hazardous or toxic fumes.

Air pollution is typically a regional concern, but the City has influence over factors that contribute to local air pollution. Cities and counties are responsible for implementing air friendly community planning that promotes pedestrian traffic, commute alternatives, and cleaner transit fleets, and can cooperate in policies and implementation to redress existing jobs housing imbalances that result in significant commuting trips. Local government policies and implementation measures can have a strong beneficial effect on limiting air pollution.

With the adoption of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, greenhouse gases are now considered air pollutants of concern in California. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also begun regulating greenhouse gases under its authority provided in the federal Clean Air Act. Although not directly linked to health impacts, greenhouse gas effects on climate change are expected to result in indirect impacts to health from higher temperatures, increased ozone concentrations, water supply, flooding, and increased fire danger. Increasing greenhouse gases and resulting climate change are a global concern that requires international, national, regional, and local action to fully address. The General Plan and the Air Quality Element provide a policy framework to address greenhouse gas impacts at the local level.

Many General Plan goals and policies adopted for air quality, resource conservation, and transportation purposes also help to reduce greenhouse gas impacts. Goals and policies that reduce vehicle travel and traffic congestion reduce criteria pollutants and greenhouse gases. Goals and policies that conserve energy in homes and businesses reduce combustion related greenhouse gases from power generation, water pumping, and heating. Therefore, few new greenhouse gas specific goals and policies are required to fulfill the City's obligation to assist the State of California in meeting its greenhouse gas reduction goals. The greenhouse gas specific goals and policies are located at the end of the Air Quality Element.

10.3 Air Quality Goals

Goal AQ-5. Reduce greenhouse gases from activities within the City by amounts needed to demonstrate consistency with State of California greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Policies: Air Quality – Greenhouse Gas Emissions

AQ-P-11: Prepare and maintain a Climate Action Plan and community greenhouse gas emission inventory for sectors with the potential for control or influence by the City that demonstrates consistency with State of California targets.

AQ-P-12: Development projects shall incorporate the applicable strategies of the City of Manteca Climate Action Plan as needed to demonstrate consistency with CAP reduction targets and AB 32.

Implementation: Air Quality – Greenhouse Gases

AQ-I-16. Track and monitor aspects of development related to CAP strategies on an ongoing basis to measure progress in achieving CAP reduction targets.

AQ-I-17. Track implementation of municipal and community projects and programs related to energy efficiency, transit service improvements, transportation facilities such as bicycle paths and lanes, pedestrian infrastructure, and other projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout the community.

AQ-I-18. Update CAP emission inventories, targets, and strategies to reflect new State of California greenhouse gas reduction targets when adopted for later years and to reflect the benefits of any new State and federal regulatory actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions to demonstrate continued consistency with State targets.